

Reopening Timeline Announced

The next phase of reopening will be gradual, as conditions allow.

As rates of vaccination increase and local jurisdictions begin to relax restrictions, the Library is preparing to reopen some reading rooms to a limited number of registered readers, possibly in early June if conditions allow.

This gradual resumption of services and access, first to a very limited number of people, will incorporate the proven health and safety policies and procedures that the Library has successfully followed in the first two phases of the Library's phased restoration of on-site operations plan.

The three main objectives of phase three of the plan are to gradually restore reading room access to limited numbers of registered readers; to gradually begin to restore limited, time-ticketed public access to Library buildings; and to begin the transition of staff working remotely back into the office environment.

The Library has updated phase three to meet these three objectives sequentially, meaning that the early focus of the plan will be gradually reopening most reading rooms to limited numbers of registered readers before beginning the gradual process of bringing limited, time-ticketed public access back to the buildings. Only after both of those activities are well underway and working well will the focus shift to transitioning teleworking staff back into the office environment.

PHASE THREE, CONTINUED ON 4



Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden testifies on April 28 about the Library's fiscal 2022 budget proposal.

Librarian Testifies at Senate Budget Hearing

The Library's fiscal 2022 budget request advances modernization goals and safety.

BY WENDI A. MALONEY

Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden testified before the Senate Appropriations Committee on April 28, detailing the Library's fiscal 2022 budget request. It aims to fund "critical program investments necessary to fulfill the Library's role, continue modernization efforts and ensure the safety and security of the Library's collections and workforce," she told senators.

Held on-site in the Dirksen Senate Office Building, the hearing took place before the Subcommittee on

the Legislative Branch. Sen. Jack Reed (D-Rhode Island), the subcommittee's chair, presided. Also present were Sens. Mike Braun (R-Indiana), the ranking member, and Martin Heinrich (D-New Mexico).

Appearing with Hayden were U.S. Comptroller General Gene Dodaro of the Government Accountability Office (GAO) and Phillip Swagel, director of the Congressional Budget Office (CBO). Hayden testified on March 3 about the Library's proposed fiscal 2022 budget before the House of Representatives.

BUDGET HEARING, CONTINUED ON 7

NOTICES

DONATED TIME

The following employees have satisfied eligibility requirements to receive leave donations from other staff members. Contact Lisa Davis at lidav@loc.gov.

Lynette Brown
Stephanie Jefferson

COVID-19 AND THE BRAIN

May 13, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Online

Research by some of the world's leading clinicians and scientists is uncovering new insights about the neurological effects of the COVID-19 virus on survivors. The Health Services Division and the Science, Technology and Business Division are hosting two expert speakers online to provide information about COVID-19-associated brain disturbances and their genesis: Masaya Ikegawa of Doshisha University in Kyoto, Japan, and Dorian A. Lamis of Emory University School of Medicine. [Register here.](#)

COVID-19 UPDATE

The Health Services Division (HSD) recognizes that some employees have received COVID-19 vaccines. However, the Library is not modifying its on-site health and safety protocols based on the vaccination status of employees. Library staff are required to wear masks when they are in shared workspaces where at least six feet of distance cannot be maintained and in common areas, hallways and restrooms.

HSD continues to monitor Library staff members with symptoms, clinical diagnoses or positive test results associated with COVID-19. On April 29, HSD announced that it had received six new reports of symptoms of COVID-19 or confirmed cases since its previous COVID-19 announcement on April 22. Most employees reporting symptoms are not diagnosed with COVID-19, but, out of caution, the Library is monitoring all reports of symptoms.

More information on the Library's pandemic response: <https://go.usa.gov/xdtV5> (intranet) or <https://go.usa.gov/xdtVQ> (public-facing staff webpage)

GAZETTE

LIBRARY
OF CONGRESS

loc.gov/staff/gazette

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MISSION OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

The Library's central mission is to engage, inspire and inform Congress and the American people with a universal and enduring source of knowledge and creativity.

ABOUT THE GAZETTE

An official publication of the Library of Congress, The Gazette encourages Library managers and staff to submit articles and photographs of general interest. Submissions will be edited to convey the most necessary information.

Back issues of The Gazette in print are available in the Communications Office, LM 143. Electronic archived issues and a color PDF file of the current issue are available online at loc.gov/staff/gazette.

GAZETTE WELCOMES LETTERS FROM STAFF

Staff members are invited to use the Gazette for lively and thoughtful debate relevant to Library issues. Letters must be signed by the author, whose place of work and telephone extension should be included so we can verify authorship. If a letter calls for management response, an explanation of a policy or actions or clarification of fact, we will ask for management response.—Ed.

Library of Congress Gazette

Washington, DC 20540-1620

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Design and production: Ashley Jones, 7-9193, gaze@loc.gov
ISSN 1049-8184

Printed by the Printing Management Section

GAZETTE DEADLINES

The deadline for editorial copy for the May 21 Gazette is Wednesday, May 12.

Email editorial copy and letters to the editor to mhartsell@loc.gov and wmal@loc.gov.

To promote events through the Library's online calendar (www.loc.gov/loc/events) and the Gazette Calendar, email event and contact information to calendar@loc.gov by 9 a.m. Monday of the week of publication.

Boxed announcements should be submitted electronically (text files) by 9 a.m. Monday the week of publication to mhartsell@loc.gov and wmal@loc.gov.

Afternoon Tea in the Copyright Office

The CASE Act What's It All About?

Thursday, May 13, 2021
12:30 – 1:30PM

An Online Event
► [Register here](#)

 Pour a cup of tea
and join us!

Copyright Teas seek to help staff deepen their knowledge about copyright and the Office's activities through information sharing and discussion.
Questions? Email Alicia Morris at amro@copyright.gov. Closed Captioning Provided.



Librarians Coach Students Remotely During the Pandemic

A regional initiative introduces a new generation of learners to the Library's resources.

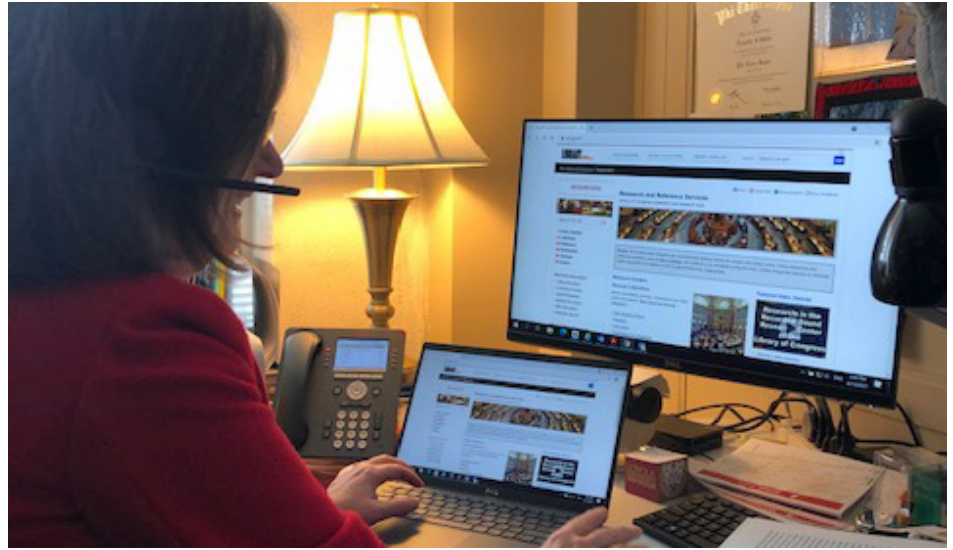
BY NANETTE GIBBS

For three years now, upper-level high school students participating in international baccalaureate (IB) diploma programs in the mid-Atlantic have taken deep dives into the Library's collections to research extended essays they are assigned to write. Pre-pandemic, they visited the Library in person and learned from expert staff how to sort through collections. Post-pandemic, IB students, like the rest of us, have transitioned to the online world. But thanks to some scrambling by schools, teachers and Library staff, we have kept our virtual doors open to these students.

IB high school students engage in a rigorous curriculum, including advanced study in sciences, mathematics, literature, languages, societies and the arts. As part of the curriculum, they write an essay of up to 4,000 words based on an independent, self-directed research project. Through an initiative of the Science, Technology and Business Division (ST&B) focusing on its business and science collections, the division has worked with schools in Delaware, the District of Columbia and Virginia.

"When the Library lowered the age requirement to use most reading rooms from 18 to 16 a few years ago, IB students became a good fit for us," Ronald Bluestone, ST&B's chief, said, adding that the Library and its specialists "are well-positioned to answer questions that support IB teachers, media specialists and their students."

When the Library closed to the public last March, students from the Sussex Academy in Delaware had just finished two days of intensive on-site classes, and additional



Nanette Gibbs

Nanette Gibbs supports the Library's outreach to international baccalaureate students from her home office.

sessions with other schools were scheduled. Quickly, staff had to repurpose in-person presentations across multiple platforms – Blackboard, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype. To our surprise, schools within the same systems were using different platforms. Many a teacher found themselves teaching us.

Once we resolved technical roadblocks, the main challenge facing us was creating a meaningful virtual experience. First, we initiated an email protocol so both students and their mentors could ask questions using our Ask a Librarian service.

At the same time, ST&B designed virtual sessions illustrating how to navigate Library webpages, use free e-resources and research guides, select research topics and read and interpret journal articles and data visualizations. Although our emphasis was on science and business resources, we stressed approaches that could be helpful across disciplines and reached out to colleagues in other divisions, as needed, to assist our young patrons with questions. Now, our virtual sessions are mandatory at some participating schools. What's more, ST&B is working on ways to make materials we created for the IB program available to any

secondary school program requiring substantive research.

Teachers report that fewer students this year are participating in any kind of online instruction because of the disruptions of the pandemic. But the IB topics we're seeing continue to be solid and extend across Library divisions. As an example, students at Mount Vernon High School in Alexandria, Virginia, are researching watershed pollution; Sylvia Plath's "The Bell Jar" and gender roles; the effect of music on moods; adolescent depression; and U.S. incarceration rates following the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Gideon v. Wainwright*.

"We are grateful for access to Library of Congress services and really appreciate the way you worked with ... the extended essay students this unprecedented pandemic school year," Jalaika Hasen, the IB coordinator at the King Abdullah Academy in Herndon, Virginia, wrote to us recently.

It's disappointing for some students not to be able to visit the Library in person. However, we believe the students who have walked through our virtual doors will continue to think of the Library for their research needs in college and beyond. ■

PHASE THREE, CONTINUED FROM 1

Decisions about when and how to move forward with phase three will continue to be based on the advice of the Health Services Division and the monitoring of conditions. But a tentative timeline for phase three includes:

- Gradually restoring most reading room access to a limited number of registered readers by appointment only, starting June 1 and continuing through July.
- Beginning to provide very limited, time-ticketed public access to Library buildings, starting in August.
- Beginning to transition teleworking staff back into the office environment in the fall.

The beginning of phase three, part one, does not include a large-scale return of researchers and the public to Library buildings. Initially, a select few reading rooms will open for a limited number of registered readers, with reduced hours of operation. Registered readers will be required to make appointments, and they will have to follow the Library's health and safety procedures, including health screening, social distancing and mask wearing.

Twelve reading rooms will reopen in three stages in June and July, as conditions allow, during phase three, part one. The first to resume limited hours of operations for a small number of registered readers will be the Law Library, Manuscript, Geography and Map and Newspaper and Current Periodical reading rooms. After they are operating well, the Performing Arts, Recorded Sound, Prints and Photographs and Moving Image reading rooms will resume limited hours of operations. Then, the Main Reading Room and the American Folklife Center, Microform and Electronic Resources Collections and Rare Book and Special Collections reading rooms will resume limited hours of operations.

Six additional reading rooms – Asian; African and Middle Eastern; Hispanic; Copyright; and Science, Technology and Business – will open after the Library moves into phase three, part two.

Additional Library employees will begin to return to on-site work during phase three, part one, as on-site operation of the reading rooms begins to resume, but the increase in on-site staff will be less than 5 percent of the Library's workforce. To ensure appropriate social distancing, many on-site employees will not work full time in Library buildings at the beginning of phase three.

Staff who can perform some of their work remotely will come on-site for the work they must do in the facilities while continuing expanded telework. Employees who can perform most of their duties while teleworking will continue to do so.

To provide employees who will be required on-site to support reading room operations with advance notice of changes in working conditions, the final decision on the June 1 start date will be made and announced in mid-May. This will give returning employees additional

time to get vaccinated and make other preparations to adjust to their on-site schedules. All employees required to come back to on-site work, either full or part time, will be contacted by their supervisors to work out their schedules.

While the number of staff returning to work on-site at the beginning of phase three is relatively small, there will not be enough capacity to provide parking for all on-site employees. Specially issued parking passes will be required to use the Madison Building garage during weekdays before 1 p.m. Every effort will continue to be made to accommodate as many employees as possible. Additional details will be provided through staff emails as soon as they are available.

More information will be provided in mid-May when a decision on the start date for phase three is made. In the meantime, staff returning to on-site work can send questions to staffquestions@loc.gov. ■

UPDATED EMERGENCY GUIDANCE

The Security and Emergency Preparedness Directorate has made available [phase 2.2 of its protective action guidance for responding to building emergencies](#). The updated guidance includes detailed information about social distancing during emergencies, evacuation assembly areas and best ways to contact emergency services.

Staff are encouraged to download the Joint Emergency Mass Notification System (JEMNS) mobile app on their personal devices and register to receive text alerts. For instructions and more information, go to <https://go.usa.gov/xs5mR>. Learn more about the Library's emergency guidance: <https://go.usa.gov/xs5mQ>.

Questions? Call (202) 707-8708 or send an email message to epp@loc.gov.

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The Little Scholars Accepting Applications for Fall

The child development center has introduced enhanced health and safety protocols.

BY ELAINA FINKELSTEIN

The Little Scholars Child Development Center temporarily closed its doors in March 2020, along with much of the rest of the world, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. But it reopened in July after adopting new health and safety measures and has been welcoming children on-site ever since.

Operated by the Library of Congress Child Care Association, Little Scholars opened its doors in 1993. It provides daycare to children of employees of the Library, other legislative branch and federal agencies and children in the community.

When Little Scholars closed on March 15, 2020, teachers and staff quickly took things online, creating a curriculum the children could do at home with their parents. Activities included online YouTube videos, Zoom calls and FaceTime sessions in which children shared art projects, sang,

read and generally kept connected to one another and the center.

In the meantime, teachers planned changes to everyday on-site activities to keep families and staff safe. With changes in place, the center reopened on July 6.

“We had to stop using certain things like sand and sand tables, but instead have individual bins for each child with their own individual Play-Doh, crayons, pencils and scissors,” Ilene Lewis, director of Little Scholars, said. “We make sure everyone has their own bin with certain items that are harder to clean.”

The teachers also created a new day-to-day agenda in which children spend more time outside than before. In addition, classes are smaller, and parents are not allowed inside the building but instead drop off and pick up children near the playground.

To keep communication flowing between teachers and parents, Little Scholars uses an online application called Tadpoles.



Children play together at the Little Scholars Child Development Center.

Little Scholars Child Development Center

Lewis explains, “Tadpoles ... lets us put in all the information about each child’s day. We put in pictures, we let parents know what art activity we are doing that day and what we did during our morning meeting. That has been great, because throughout the day the parents can get that information and communicate back and forth with the teachers.”

Little Scholars is located at 601 E. Capitol St., SE, in Washington, D.C. To learn more about the center, contact Lewis at ilene.littlescholars@gmail.com. ■

Suffrage Stories Win a GLAMi

The Library, the National Archives and Records Administration and the Smithsonian Institution have won a GLAMi Gold Award for a joint social media campaign, #19SuffrageStories, they conducted last August counting down to the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage.

GLAMi awards (short for galleries, libraries, archives, museums, innovation) recognize outstanding work by cultural heritage organizations. MuseWeb, formerly Museums and the Web, confers the awards. The Library’s honor is in the marketing and promotion category.

In the days leading up to the 100th anniversary of ratification of the 19th amendment, the Library, the National Archives and the Smithsonian drew on their collections to tell stories on social media about women’s voting rights history.

The judges noted the impressive content from the collections, the wide reach to new audiences and the “perfect alignment of idea



and timing” with the election, the pandemic and awareness of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and people of color) issues. ■



Maria Peña

Maria Peña

Maria Peña is a public relations strategist in the Office of Communications.

Tell us a little about your background.

I was born in Granada, Nicaragua, and my family and I migrated to the U.S. in the late 1970s, fleeing from a ravaging civil war. I was 10 years old but had already witnessed acts of violence and political oppression. One night, peeking through a small window in my darkened living room, I saw soldiers shooting a teenage boy as other protesters frantically ran for their lives. It was no longer safe for us to remain there.

The civil war and our ensuing migration marked a before and after with lifelong consequences. When we arrived in Washington, D.C., in 1978, I enrolled in Oyster Bilingual Elementary School.

While in high school, I won a scholarship to American University, where I majored in broadcast journalism and minored in French.

I arrived at the Library last December, after a 30-year career as a bilingual journalist covering issues of interest to Hispanics and Latin America from the halls of Congress, the White House and other federal agencies.

What brought you to the Library, and what do you do?

I always thought I'd retire doing what I've loved best about my career as a reporter. But as the media landscape has become more unstable with each passing year, I did some serious soul-searching about what kind of chapters I'd write in the next phase of my professional life.

I am thrilled to work at the Library as a public relations strategist, not only because the Library is a revered and world-renowned cultural institution, but also because I now have great opportunities to continue to tell wonderful stories about human endeavors.

My main job is helping to promote new acquisitions and programs by drafting and distributing press releases and reaching out to key media stakeholders. I also contribute the occasional blog about people and items of interest at the Library.

Working in the Office of Communications is not very different from working as a reporter, because I still apply many of the skills involved in good reporting and storytelling: gathering information from official sources, interviewing subjects and fact-checking data before releasing it to the public.

What are the challenges of starting a new position during the pandemic?

The onboarding process was extremely difficult for me. Up until last weekend, when we had a small picnic with Communications Office staff at park near the Library, I had met only two staffers in person, including my immediate supervisor. And I have yet to set

foot in any of the reading rooms – I have only a vague memory of the Main Reading Room from visiting with friends many years ago.

I've known my colleagues through email exchanges and Skype or Zoom meetings. That doesn't help build the kind of rapport and camaraderie that can come from sharing a coffee break or being in an office setting.

I can't honestly say that I enjoy the isolation of working from home, even if I save money in commuting costs. But I do enjoy calling colleagues on the phone to brainstorm ideas or simply share lived experiences.

What do you like to do outside work?

I love spending time with my family and our pet, going on long walks, trying out new recipes or snuggling up with a good book. I've been trying to practice meditation, because a friend of mine recommended it for stress and mindfulness. But it's not as easy as it sounds, so I have to keep at it.

I also enjoy gardening, listening to music, dancing, taking pictures and reading good content online. Lately, I've been following lectures and lessons on a popular website called Great Courses. It's got tons of thought-provoking content, and it feels like reliving the college experience minus the hassles and deadlines.

What is something your co-workers may not know about you?

As some people tried out bread-making during the pandemic, I started a bilingual podcast, "Voces for Change," focused on immigrants who are making a difference in their local communities across the U.S. It is fun to do but also time-consuming. So, unfortunately, I haven't been able to produce any this year so far. I do hope to relaunch it this spring.

My hope is to use some of the material for a companion book sometime later this year or next. ■

BUDGET HEARING, CONTINUED FROM 1

Reed opened the hearing by thanking the women and men who work in the agencies represented. “This past year has been difficult,” he said, citing the COVID-19 pandemic and the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol. But “these challenges didn’t stop the Library, the CBO and GAO from delivering for Congress and the American people.”

He said Congress should not skimp on investments in the Library and the other agencies, “because in the end they help us better serve our constituents.” Yet, he added, “we will have to balance the needs of all the legislative agencies against our resources. That includes supporting your agencies while also making sure other priorities are protected.”

Like Reed, Braun spoke of fiscal limitations. “Even though the Legislative Branch appropriations bill is only a small part of federal spending,” he said, “our national debt crisis threatens every congressional priority.”

Hayden highlighted the Library’s accomplishments during the pandemic – including handling an 800 percent increase in remote work, maintaining essential Congressional Research Service and Copyright Office operations and reimagining programs for virtual presentation.

Worthy of special note during this time, Hayden said, was the circulation by the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS) of more than 20 million copies of braille, audio and large-print items. Hayden reported that Karen Keninger, NLS’ director, will retire at the end of May. Since assuming her position in 2012, Keninger has sought to leverage advanced technology and expand content for all print-disabled people, Hayden told the subcommittee. “She accomplished these goals and so much more for the NLS.”

Hayden also commented on the reprogramming of monies from the budget of the Architect of

the Capitol (AOC) designated for a new Library collections storage module in Fort Meade, Maryland, to support construction of fencing around the Capitol after Jan. 6. “We would ask that this vital funding be restored to the AOC’s budget as part of any security supplemental bill that the committee may consider,” she said.

Hayden asked the subcommittee to approve a budget for the Library of about \$846 million for fiscal 2022. The request reflects a 5.5 percent increase over the fiscal 2021 enacted appropriation and includes \$24.2 million in mandatory pay and price-level increases. The balance, she said, represents critical program investments.

The investments include modernization efforts – replacing the legacy Voyager integrated library system with the new Library Collections and Access Platform, called L-CAP, and implementing a new enterprise planning and management program to optimize

planning at the Library. Proposed investments include security-related requests as well, such as extending the same advanced level of IT security the Library applies to its on-premises data centers to its cloud-hosting environment.

Also in the security-related category are monies to modernize the Library’s nearly 20-year-old integrated electronic security system (IESS) used by both the Library and the U.S. Capitol Police (USCP) for physical security monitoring of Library facilities and collections and funding to replace the Library’s legacy 3G cellular system with a new 5G system.

Installed in 2004, the 3G system was designed only to provide connectivity for public Library spaces. On Jan. 6, USCP and AOC employees reported multiple dropped cellular connections and the inability to initiate calls out of Library facilities, Hayden reported in her written testimony.

BUDGET HEARING, CONTINUED ON 8

LIBRARIAN THANKS STAFF FOR SERVICE



Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden marked Public Service Recognition Week on Monday with a [video thanking staff](#) for their “amazing performance over this last unprecedented year.” Staff rose to the challenge of finding new ways to connect with the American people, she said, allowing the Library to “tell the American narrative to more people than any year in our history.”

BUDGET HEARING, CONTINUED FROM 7

Referring to modernizing the IESS and the Library's cellular system, Hayden said, "These two requests ... continue to be important for life safety and security and would be good candidates for any supplemental security bills."

For more details about programmatic requests, see [the March 12 Gazette issue](#), which covers Hayden's fiscal 2022 budget testimony in the House.

During a question-and-answer period, Reed asked about the progress of the Library's new visitor experience initiative. "This is an exciting public-private partnership that will make the Library's treasures more accessible to students, researchers and visitors to the nation's capital for generations to come," he said.

The Library seeks \$10 million in its fiscal 2022 budget proposal for the project, which is anticipated to require \$40 million total in appropriated funds and \$20 million in private donations. Congress provided support in the fiscal 2018, 2020 and 2021 enacted budgets, and the \$10 million request in the fiscal 2022 proposal would represent the final installment of appropriated funds.

Hayden told the subcommittee that the project's three components – an orientation gallery, a treasures gallery and a center for youth and families – remain on schedule. Starting with the treasures gallery, the Library is set to begin unveiling the new visitor experience in December 2022.

Regarding private funding, Hayden said the Library has firm commitments for \$12.5 million and expects to complete the private \$20 million fundraising within the next six months.

Reed also asked about the Library's cybersecurity capabilities. Hayden responded that the Library takes cybersecurity seriously, noting that it has implemented all the recommendations the GAO put forth several years ago to ameliorate information

technology weaknesses and adhere to National Institute of Standards and Technology guidance for ensuring cybersecurity.

In addition, the Library actively participates in the Legislative Branch Cybersecurity Working Group, she said, and collaborates with the technology offices of other agencies.

"We definitely know that [cybersecurity] is a major part of what we have to be concerned about as we modernize and work on our IT structures," she testified.

Braun inquired into the Library's deacidification program, used as a preservation treatment for paper-based collections. Hayden explained that the program had started almost 20 years ago, and "most of the materials that require that type of response have been taken care of."

A rebalancing is underway, she said, to "give the Library an opportunity to continue to preserve and conserve materials that do not

require that method and to focus on ... ingesting and storing digital content."

Heinrich asked how Congress can work with the Library to get more materials out to rural communities and expand the reach of the Surplus Book Program, through which books not needed for the Library's collections are donated to eligible organizations.

The program, Hayden said, is "a very effective way to provide brand-new books and materials ... to send to, in particular, libraries, schools and other entities that provide literacy services."

She said the Library has been working with congressional offices "to make sure, even during this time, that we make it easier for staff members to work with communities and specify what types of books, what types of materials, they could use."

View a recording of the hearing: <https://go.usa.gov/xHmBS> ■

PRESERVATION DIRECTORATE HOSTS REP. AMODEI



Rep. Mark Amodei (R-Nevada, center) views a map of the upper Great Plains and Rocky Mountains region with Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden and Elmer Eusman, chief of conservation. Amodei asked questions about the Library's preservation strategies during a March 3 House Appropriations subcommittee hearing, and the Library invited him to view its work firsthand. Read about it on the Preservation Directorate's new blog, [Guardians of Memory](#).

Jacob Nadai